

New Year Edition Newsletter 2025



"What's been so great is not just the practical support, but knowing that you are always there on the end of the phone. We don't know what we would do without you." 4SVS Client

Caring . Forward Thinking . Trusted



Featured in this newsletter:

- How our Sight Care Advisors can help you
- Scams – what to look out for
- Fundraising: recycle with us this new year!



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CEO's Message and Our 2023/24 Impact



We support the following number of clients across the county:

Our Services are available across West Sussex

Chichester 492
Arun 814
Horsham 426
Worthing 352
Adur 297
Mid Sussex 389
Crawley 276
Outside the county or unknown 182



As we welcome the New Year, all of us at 4Sight Vision Support would like to wish our clients, and their friends and family, a happy and peaceful 2025.

As we look to the coming year, we are very aware that demand for our services has never been greater, and research predicts a further 23% growth in demand by 2032 (RNIB). Providing our free support and specialist information to blind and partially sighted residents, their families and carers across West Sussex, is central to our mission to help clients live Life Without Limits: and securing funding and resources to provide this care is a constant challenge.

Our recently-publicised Impact Report highlighted some key aspects of our services, and the demands upon them.

We support people of all ages in West Sussex aged from 1 to 109: 82% of our clients are over the age of 65.

- Under 18 – 74
- 19 to 65 – 439
- 65 and over – 2652

Our impact in numbers:

- We now support over 3,400 clients – a 21% increase over the last 12 months.
- We carried out 348 Low Vision Assessments to help identify magnification, techniques and products to help our clients with everyday tasks such as reading, shopping,



medication, and preparing meals.

- We made more than 3,300 telephone welfare and advice calls.
- Our Sight Care Advisors made 945 client contacts, including 308 registrations for a Certificate of Visual Impairment.
- We held 128 equipment demonstrations, providing advice on specialist pieces of low vision equipment to ensure our clients are choosing the most appropriate tools and solutions for their needs.
- Our Accessible Technology Specialist made 516 contacts – an increase of 115% – providing support, information and knowledge to help our clients learn to adapt to technology after sight loss.
- We have supported 365 clients this year (an increase of 209%) with advice on benefits and concessions they may be entitled to, as well as support to access these, appeals, tribunals and assessment.



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4SVS Client

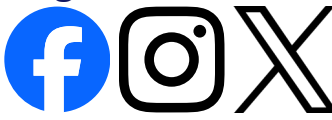
- We sent out 12,819 of these wonderful Newsletters! Hopefully providing you all with information, advice and activities in a choice of formats accessible to you.

I am one of 27% of our staff with lived experience of sight loss: 33% of our Trustees and 10% of our volunteers also have lived experience of sight loss. I am extremely proud of all our Team, both staff and volunteers, and our aim is to bring our experience, knowledge, commitment and resources to support even more clients in West Sussex as the new year progresses.



Kirstie
Kirstie Thomas, Chief Executive Officer

Contact us today:
☎ 01243 828 555 or email:
✉ enquiries@4sight.org.uk
www.4sight.org.uk
🖱 @4sightVS



News and Information

Low Vision Solutions Open Day

- **Tuesday 25th March**, 2pm to 5pm, West Wittering Memorial Hall, Elms Lane, West Wittering, PO20 8LW.
- **Monday 12th May**, 11am to 2.30pm, Roffey Millenium Hall, Crawley Road, Horsham, RH12 4DT.
- **Thursday 11th September**, 11am to 2.30pm, Midhurst Methodist Church, North Street, Midhurst, GU29 9DU.

Gain hands-on experience with products and technology to aid you in your daily activities – electronic magnifiers, both portable and desktop, as well as text to speech scanners and other assistive technology. Entry is free, no appointment needed. To find out more please contact us. (Don't forget we have large print diaries and calendars available, if you'd like to note all these dates down somewhere!)



What is a Sight Care Advisor and how can they help you?

Coming to terms with a sight loss diagnosis can be a devastating and life-changing time. Our Sight Care Advisors, Karen and Jan (based in St Richard's Hospital, Chichester and Southlands Hospital, Shoreham-by-Sea, respectively) are there for you.



Karen says

“My role is about guiding patients through their diagnosis and connecting them to the right support.”

One of our clients, Margaret, has kindly shared how our Sight Care Advisors are supporting her.

We first met Margaret in the Eye Clinic in January 2024 where tests and scans revealed that she has significant retinal occlusions in her left eye which required an urgent injection. A follow-up appointment was made to see a Consultant. In the meantime, we

discussed how she was managing with everyday tasks and referred her to a Vision Rehabilitation Specialist at West Sussex County Council.

Margaret received her injection (a slow release implant), we were in attendance to offer moral support and then phoned her to see how she was, also giving her the Patient Line telephone number in case she had any problems prior to her next appointment.



Sadly, the overall prognosis for Margaret's vision in her left eye was poor. Her Consultant agreed that she should be registered as Sight Impaired, and perhaps Severely Sight Impaired in future. We completed the Certificate of Registration for Margaret, which enables her to access further practical and financial support, we gave her information and assistance with benefits and concessions she may be entitled to.

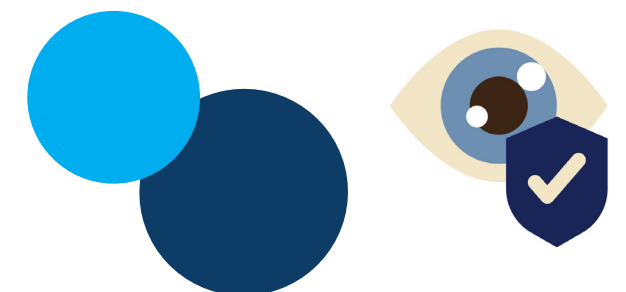
We also referred her for one of our Low Vision Assessments, so she could be assessed for any products or techniques that would help her make the best use of her remaining vision.

Margaret says

“Your wonderful help over this last very trying and difficult year, has been so welcome and has made each appointment more bearable, and having someone to talk to and to call on for advice is invaluable. I wouldn't know what to do without you.”

Margaret continues to receive treatment and knows she can contact our Sight Care Advisors at any time for advice, support and reassurance.

If you are living with sight loss and need some support please contact us.



For further details about any of these articles, please call us on: **01243 828 555** or email: **enquiries@4sight.org.uk**

Spotlight on Scam Prevention



Thanks to funding from Sussex Police, via their Community Safety Fund, we are pleased to raise awareness of some of the ever-evolving ways that criminals use to scam the public.

A scam is when someone tries to take your money by pretending to help you, or by offering you something which they are not going to give you. You can get scammed over the phone, online and by email. Every year, the British public loses billions of pounds to fraudsters.

Someone might ask you for information which can help them to try to take your money: they might ask for your name, date of birth, address, bank account details, card details, passwords, etc. It can be difficult to tell if something is a scam: if you stop and think before you share information or pay money, it might help you to decide.

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A common scam is 'impersonation', when a fraudster pretends to be someone you think you can trust, such as your bank, the police, a delivery company, a utility company, a government department (e.g. HMRC), etc. They will try to persuade you to give them money or information which could enable them to try to take your money.

Remember: your bank will never ask you to transfer your money to a 'safe' account. The police will never ask you for money to help them. Only criminals will try to rush and panic you into taking money out of your account, moving it to a different account, or sharing information about yourself.

If you get an unexpected message or a call and someone asks you for money, or information which could help them to take your money, call the organisation back on a number you can trust. For example, if someone says they are from your bank you can find the phone number for your bank on your bank card.



Types of scam include:

Card fraud – when the information from your credit or debit card, or the card itself is stolen

Banking fraud – criminals gain access to and take money from your bank account

Cash machine fraud – where a small, discreet device is added to the machine that captures your information

Cheque scam – either counterfeit, forged or fraudulently altered

Delivery fraud – where you receive a call, text, email or card through your door about an undelivered parcel

Doorstep scam – a cold-caller tries to offer you a service you don't really need

Holiday fraud – a criminal impersonates trusted websites or creates fake adverts to trick you into booking a holiday through them

Identity theft – your personal information is stolen and used

Investment fraud – you are convinced to move your money into a fictitious fund or to pay for what later turns out to be a fake investment

Invoice and mandate – criminals pose as someone from a trusted organisation and provide you with new or amended bank account details

Payment in advance – when you are convinced to pay an upfront fee in order to receive a prize/service, high-value goods or loans which never materialise

Purchase fraud – online shopping which tricks people into paying for goods and services that don't exist

Romance fraud – when a criminal uses a fake profile to form a relationship with you

Stolen mobile phones

If someone asks you for information or money:

Stop: before you share information or pay money.

Think: 'Is this a scam, or is it real?'

You might also want to ask someone you trust for their opinion.

We urge you to protect those around you by talking to your friends, family, neighbours and others in your community. Share information on the different types of scams, how to identify them and how to report them. If you become a victim of fraud, please report your experiences to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or follow online advice at:

www.actionfraud.police.uk However if you are vulnerable or older, or reporting on behalf of someone who is, please also report this directly to the police.

Just remember: if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Fundraising News

Congratulations to our 200 Club winners:

Nov: Mrs R, Haywards Heath, No. 58
Dec: Mrs Matthews, Shoreham-by-Sea No. 111

We look forward to letting you know the results of all our Christmas 2024 fundraising activities in our next edition, as many things were still ongoing when we printed this newsletter (in mid-December)!

Out With the Old...and Give it to us!

As we welcome the New Year, it's a great time to reaffirm a commitment to recycling our everyday items to do our bit for the environment. We would be pleased to take some domestic recycling off your hands, plus a range of old household items you might have lying around gathering dust! We would also be grateful for new and unopened Christmas gifts that you have decided 'aren't for you', to use as raffle and auction prizes.

We collect the following items:

- Jewellery and watches (all any condition or age)
- Old or foreign coins and notes
- Stamps from everyday post or stamp collections



- Old games consoles, cameras, video cameras, sat navs, ipods and MP3 players
- Your old car!
- Cracker, biscuit and cake wrappers
- Pringles tubes
- Mini cheese nets
- Bread or bakery plastic packaging (inc. plastic trays, zipper bags, plastic packs, closure tags)
- Cheese packets (please wash these first!)
- Ink cartridges (except laser toner cartridges)

Please contact us to find out where to take your unwanted items.

Don't forget to let us know if you have moved or changed your phone number, so that we can continue contacting you to support you.

For further details about any of these fundraising activities, please call us on: **01243 838 001** or email: **fundraising@4sight.org.uk**